



Guideline—

City of Somerville Resident Survey 2006 Results Report

June 2006



Research Objectives & Methodology

Guideline was commissioned by the City of Somerville to conduct a satisfaction survey among residents of Somerville.

Objectives:

1. To measure the overall satisfaction with the City of Somerville among a representative population of residents.
2. To measure resident satisfaction with specific departments and services.

Methodology:

- Guideline conducted a telephone survey among 400 residents. A random digit dial sample was used and respondents were called during the week and on weekends to ensure a randomly selected sample.
- Final data (among total respondents) was then weighted on race and income to ensure the respondent sample is representative of the population of Somerville.
 - Please note that reported subgroups are not weighted.
- Based on the respondent group size survey responses may be interpreted at a 95% confidence interval with a $\pm 4.8\%$ error margin.

Executive Summary

Overall ratings for the City of Somerville are high with the majority of Somerville residents thinking that Somerville is moving in the right direction. Roughly three-quarters of residents rate Somerville and their specific neighborhood as a great place to live and over 80% of residents would recommend Somerville as a great place to live for people like themselves.

Roughly half of residents rate the quality of Somerville city government and services as average while one-third of residents rate the city above average.

The most important issues among residents are Safety/Crime and Education issues. However the majority of residents feel safe during both the day and after dark and the majority of parents (with children attending Somerville public schools) rate the education their child is receiving as good or excellent.

The highest rated town services include Fire, Recycling, Public Library and Garbage Collection services. The lowest rated services include Street Maintenance, Public Schools, and Youth Services.

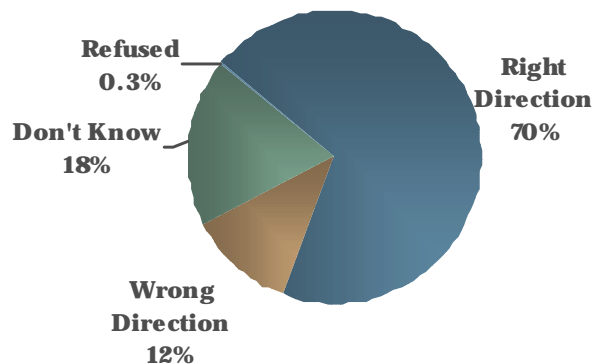
Residents are satisfied the most with the customer service of Libraries, the 311 call center and the Elections department while they are the least satisfied with the customer service of the Traffic & Parking and the Inspectional Services department.

Overall Direction

The majority of Somerville residents think that Somerville is moving in the right direction. Younger residents, shorter tenure residents, and residents that make \$60-\$80K are more likely to think that Somerville is moving in the right direction.

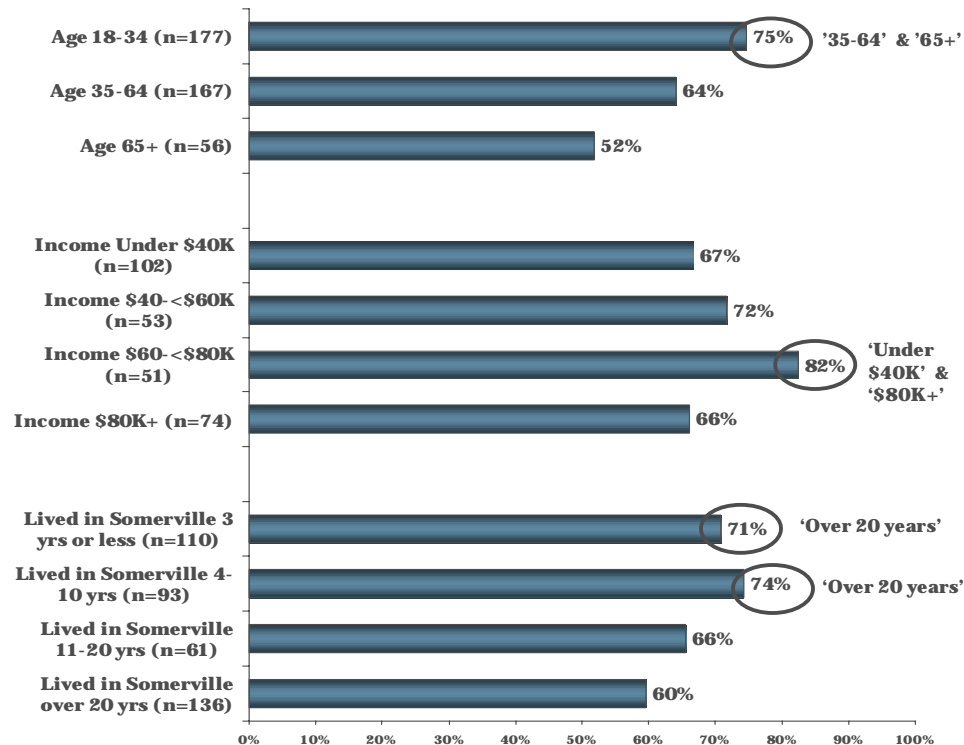
What direction is Somerville moving in?

(Wtd Total n=380)



What direction is Somerville moving in?

(% Right Direction)

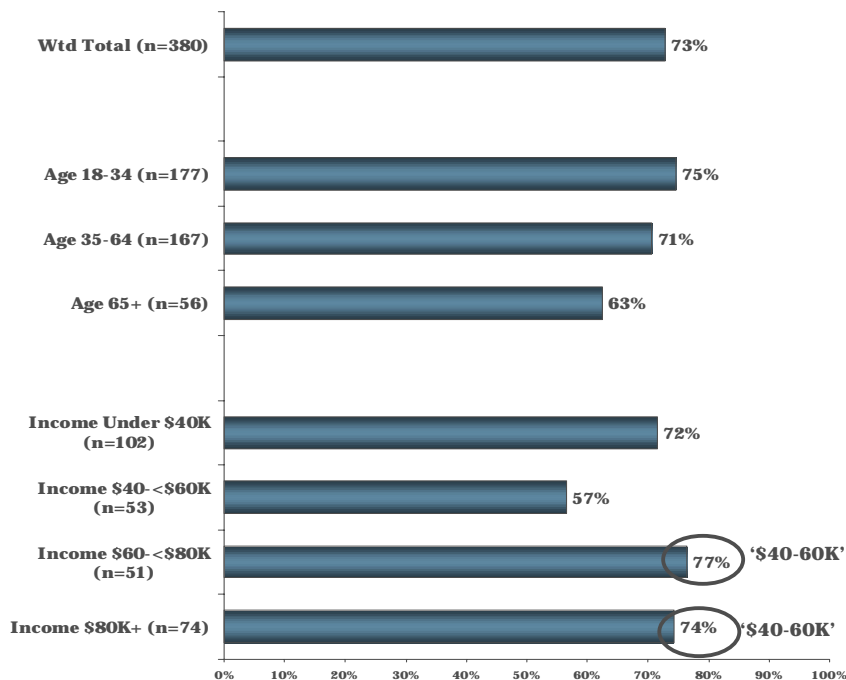


Q1 : Overall, would you say that the City of Somerville is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

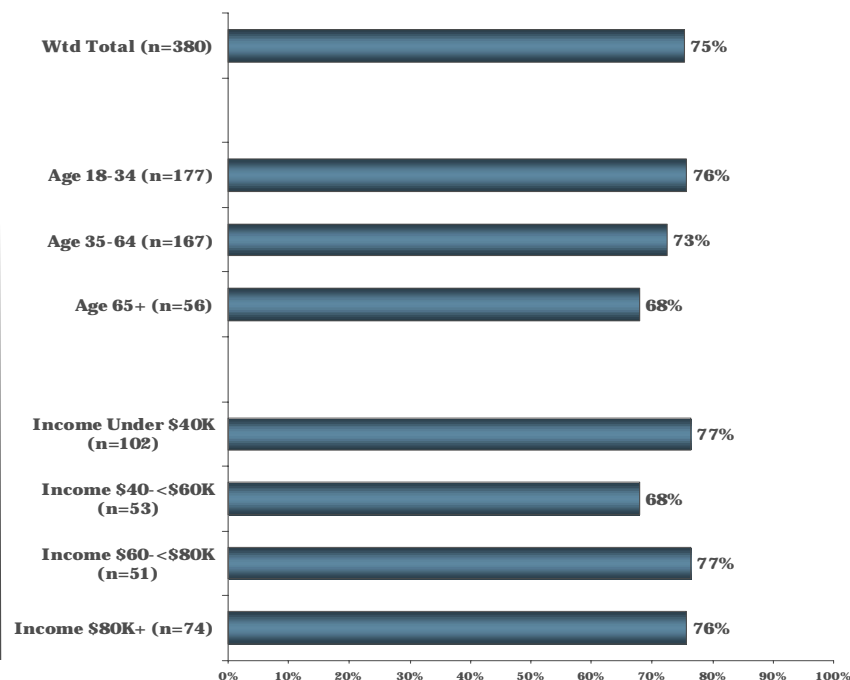
Overall Ratings

Roughly three-quarters of residents rate Somerville and their specific neighborhood as a great place to live.

How do you rate Somerville as a place to live?
(Top 2 Box)



How do you rate your particular neighborhood as a place to live?
(Top 2 Box)



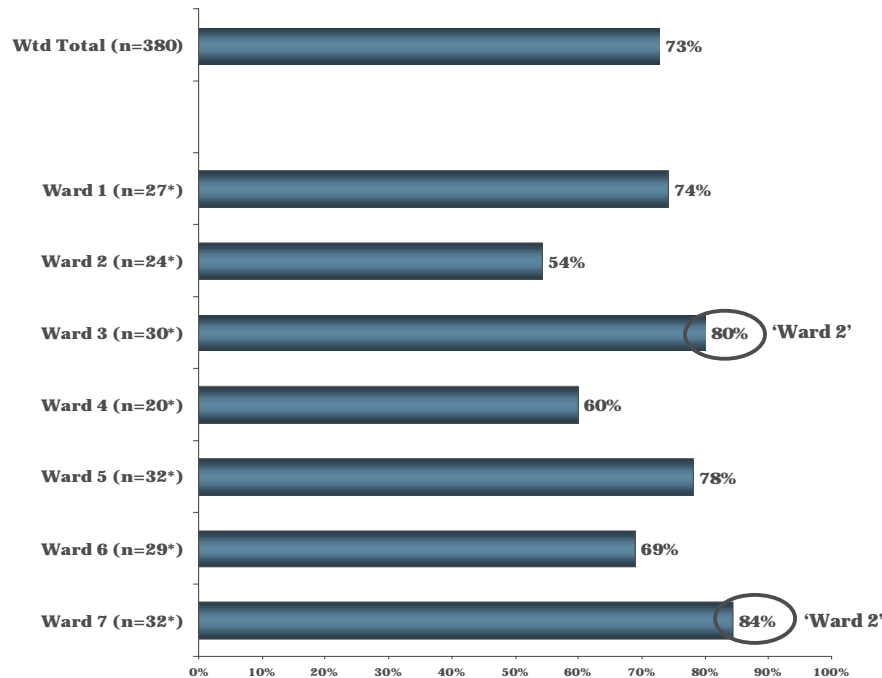
Q3 : How do you rate your particular Somerville as a place to live, where 1 is not a great place to live and 5 is a great place to live?

Q4: How do you rate your particular neighborhood as a place to live, where 1 is not a great place to live and 5 is a great place to live?

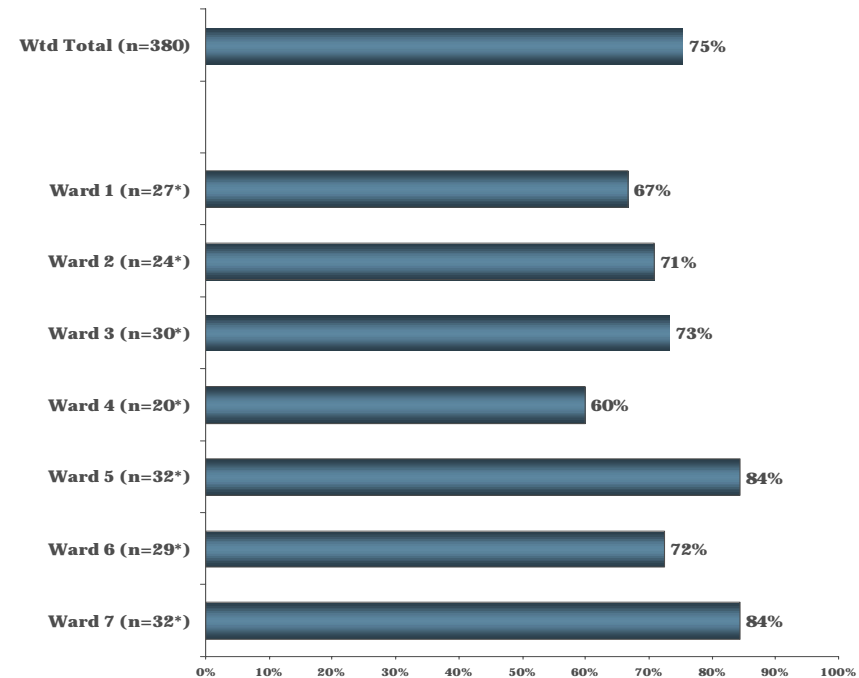
○ = significantly higher than noted subgroup

Overall Ratings – By Ward

How do you rate Somerville as a place to live?
(Top 2 Box)



How do you rate your particular neighborhood as a place to live?
(Top 2 Box)



Q3 : How do you rate your particular Somerville as a place to live, where 1 is not a great place to live and 5 is great place to live?

Q4: How do you rate your particular neighborhood as a place to live, where 1 is not a great place to live and 5 is a great place to live?

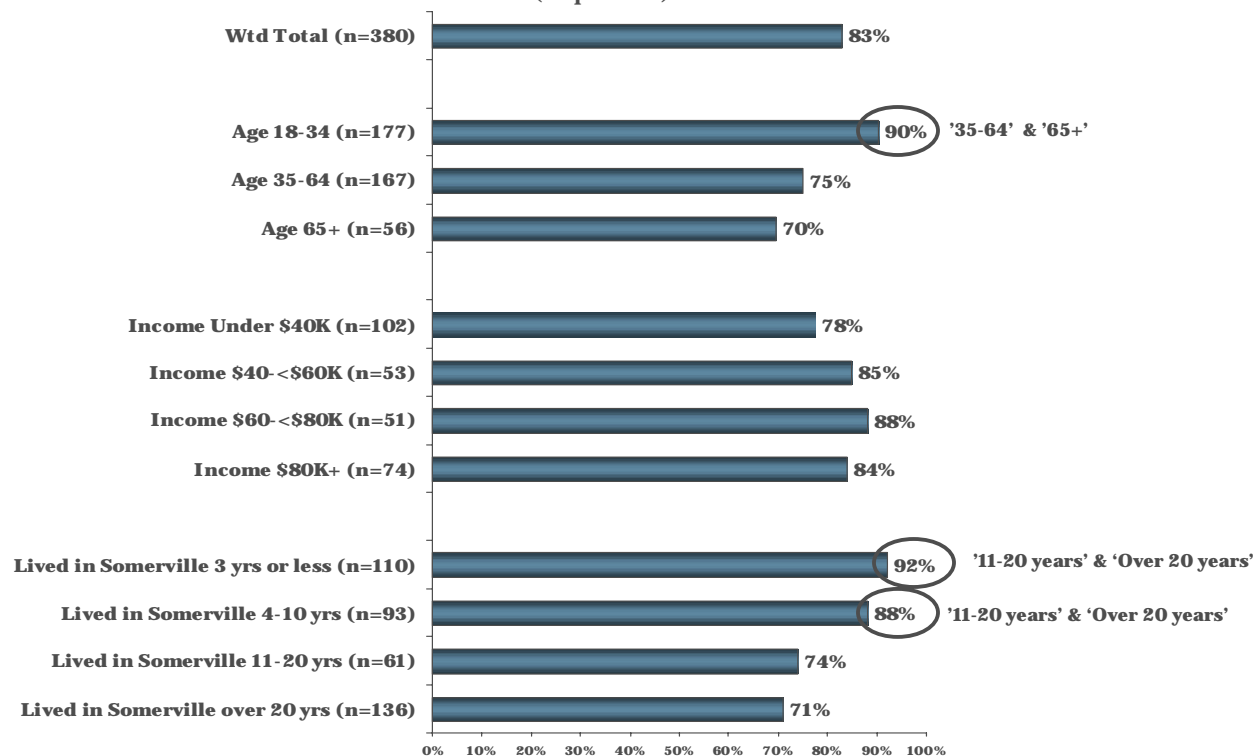
* Caution Small Base Size

○ = significantly higher than noted subgroup

Recommend Somerville

Over 80% of residents would recommend Somerville as a great place to live for people like themselves. Younger residents and residents with shorter tenure recommend Somerville significantly more than other residents.

Recommend Somerville as a place to live for people like you? (Top 2 Box)



Q3 : How do you rate your particular Somerville as a place to live, where 1 is not a great place to live and 5 is a great place to live?

Q4: How do you rate your particular neighborhood as a place to live, where 1 is not a great place to live and 5 is a great place to live?

* Caution Small Base Size

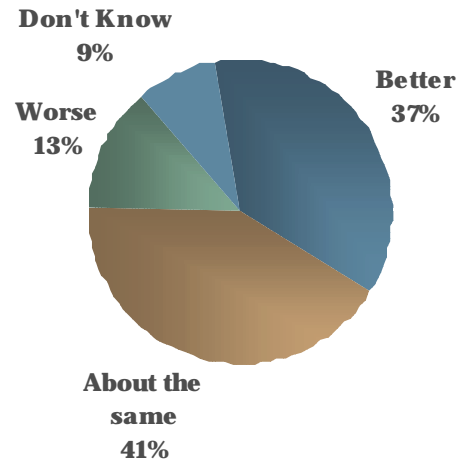
○ = significantly higher than noted subgroup

Comparison

Approximately 78% of residents feel that Somerville is better or about the same as other places they have lived or know well.

Compared to other places you have lived in or know well, is Somerville...?

(Wtd Total n=380)

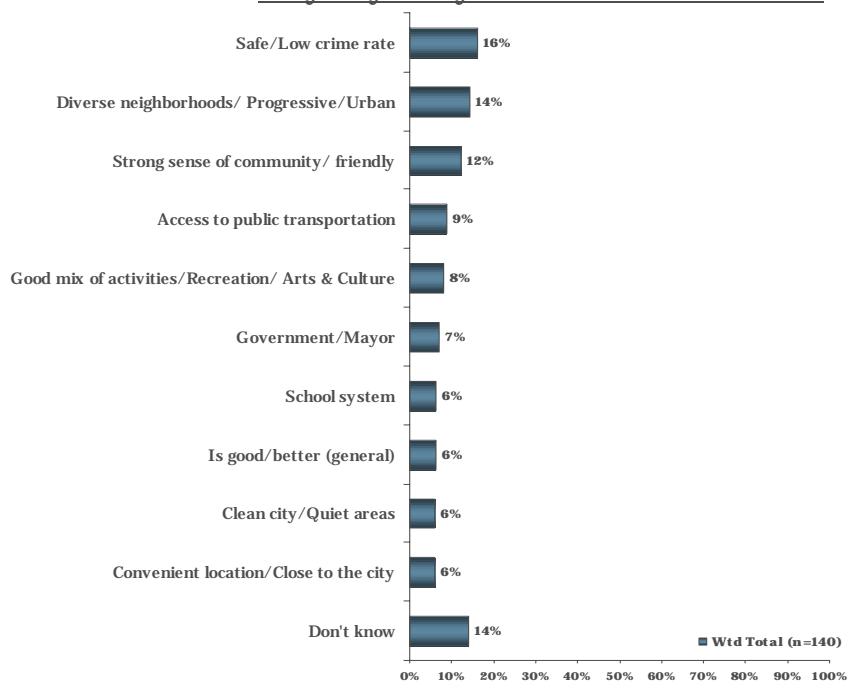


Q2: Compared to other places you have lived in or know well, would you say that Somerville is better, worse, or about the same?

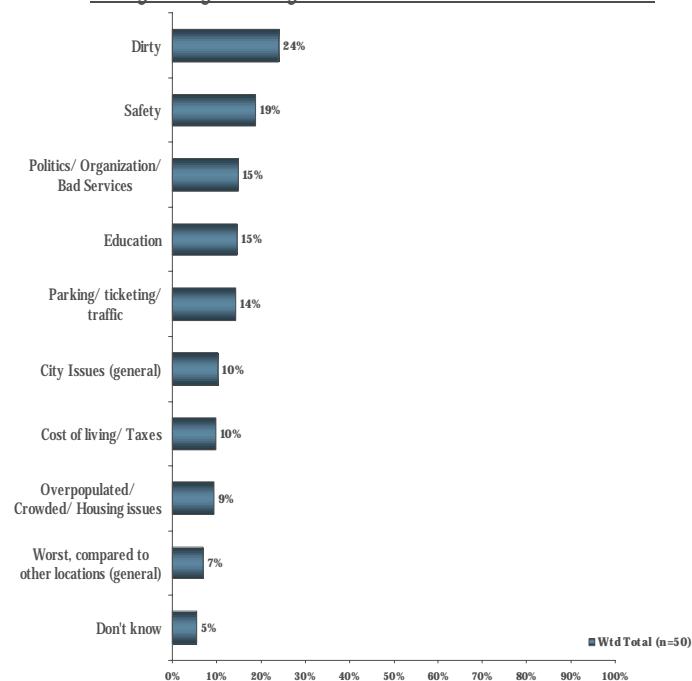
Comparison

Of respondents who say that Somerville is better than other places they have lived, the top reasons include low crime and diverse/progressive neighborhoods. The primary reasons residents feel Somerville is worse are cleanliness and safety issues.

Why do you say that Somerville is better?



Why do you say that Somerville is worse?



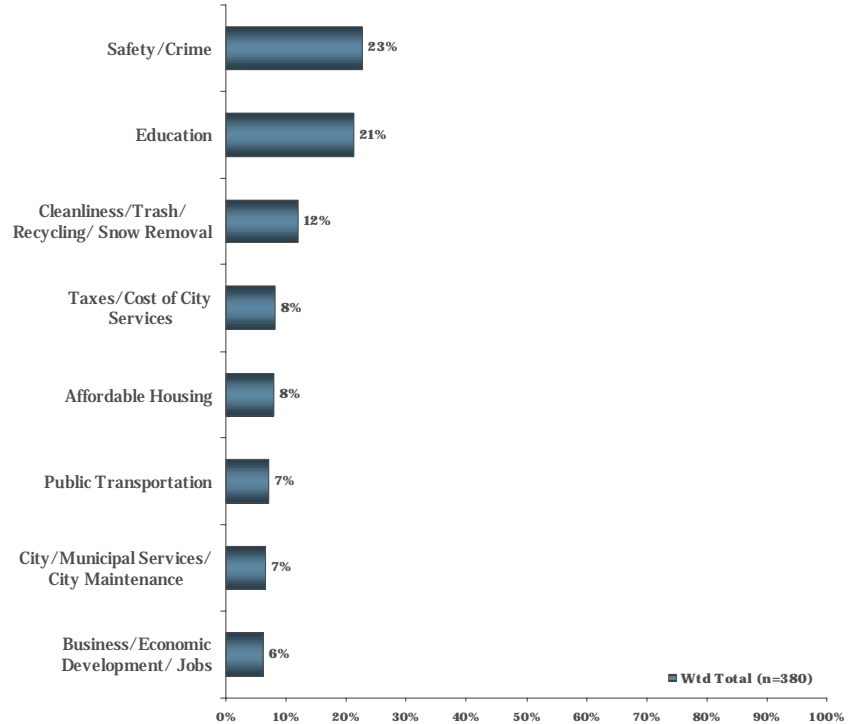
Q2a : Why do you say that Somerville is better? (Top Mentions >5%)

Q2b: Why do you say that Somerville is worse? (Top Mentions >5%)

Important Issues

The most important issues among residents are Safety/Crime and Education issues.

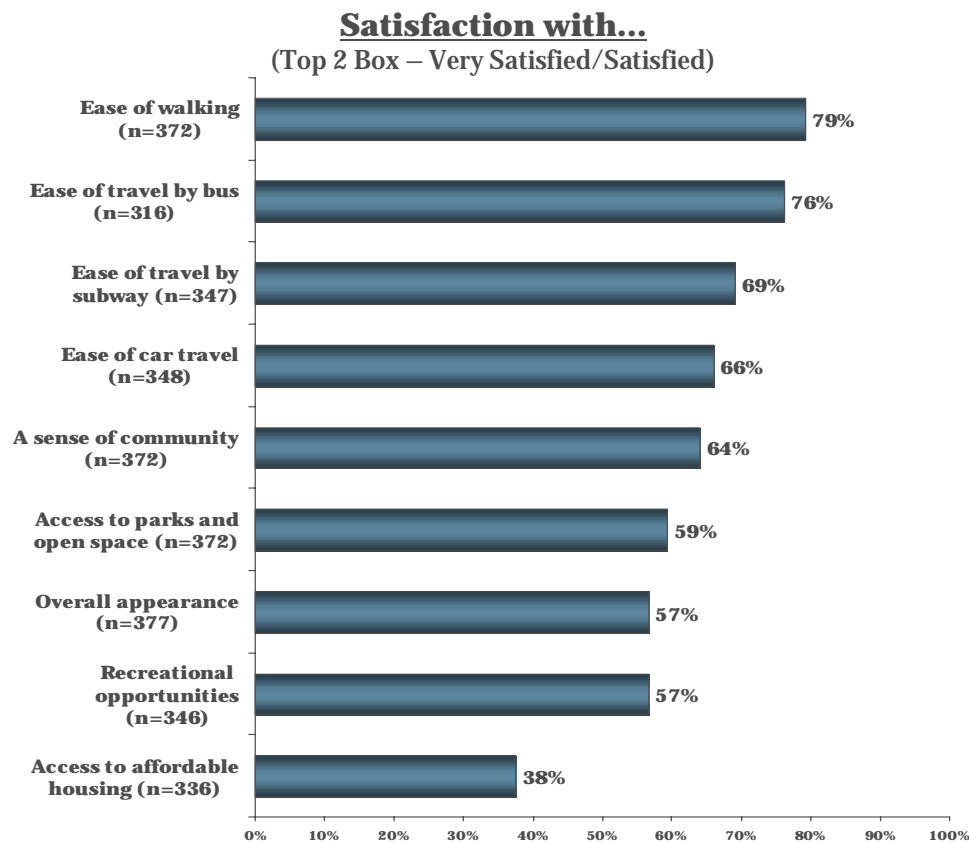
What issues are most important to you?



Q1a : In thinking about whether Somerville is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction, what issues are most important to you? (Mentions >5%)

Overall Satisfaction With...

Of all the aspects rated, ease of walking was the highest rated item followed by ease of travel by both bus and subway. Access to affordable housing was the lowest rated item.



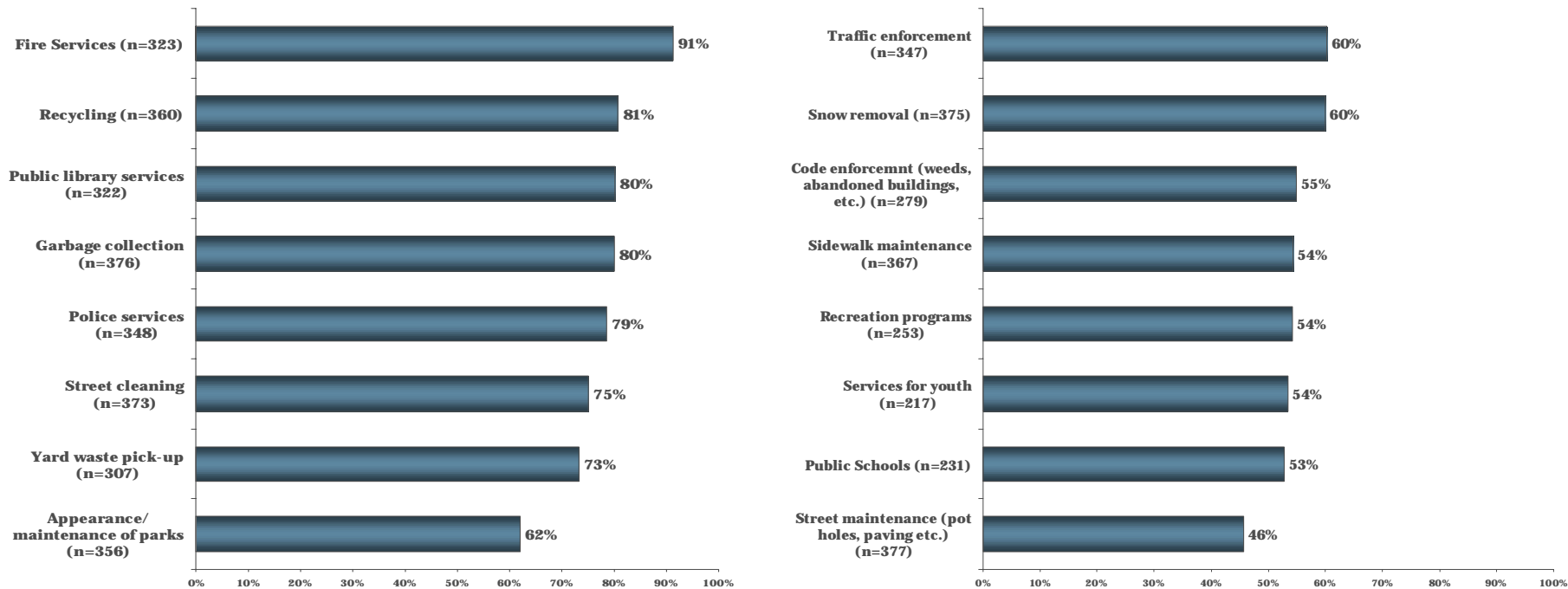
Q7 : Using a scale of very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, please rate the city of Somerville on the following:

Please note that respondents who said don't know, not applicable or refused were taken out of these percentages. Base sizes for each reflect weighted total answering.

Satisfaction with City Services

The highest rated services include Fire, Recycling, Public Library and Garbage Collection services. The lowest rated services include Street Maintenance, Public Schools, and Youth Services.

Satisfaction with City Services (Top 2 Box – Very Satisfied/Satisfied)

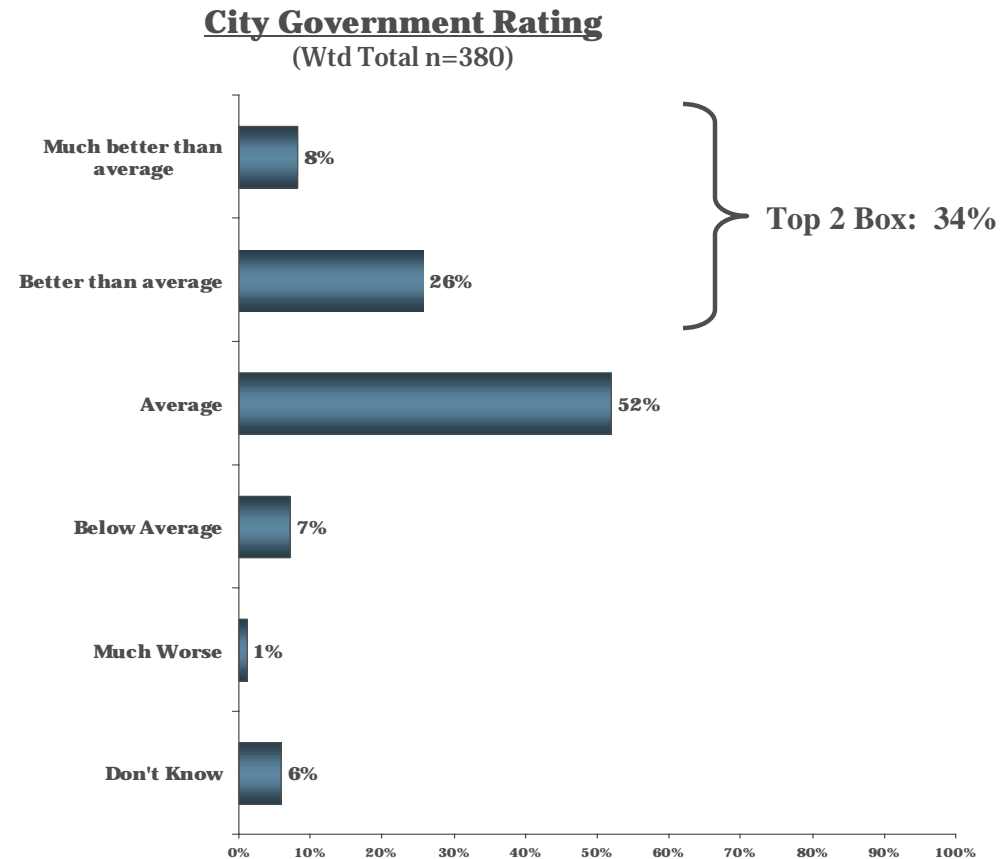


Q8 : Using the same scale of very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, please rate your satisfaction with the following City services:

Please note that respondents who said don't know, not applicable or refused were taken out of these percentages. Base sizes for each reflect weighted total answering.

City Government

Approximately 34% of residents say that the quality of Somerville city government is better than average.

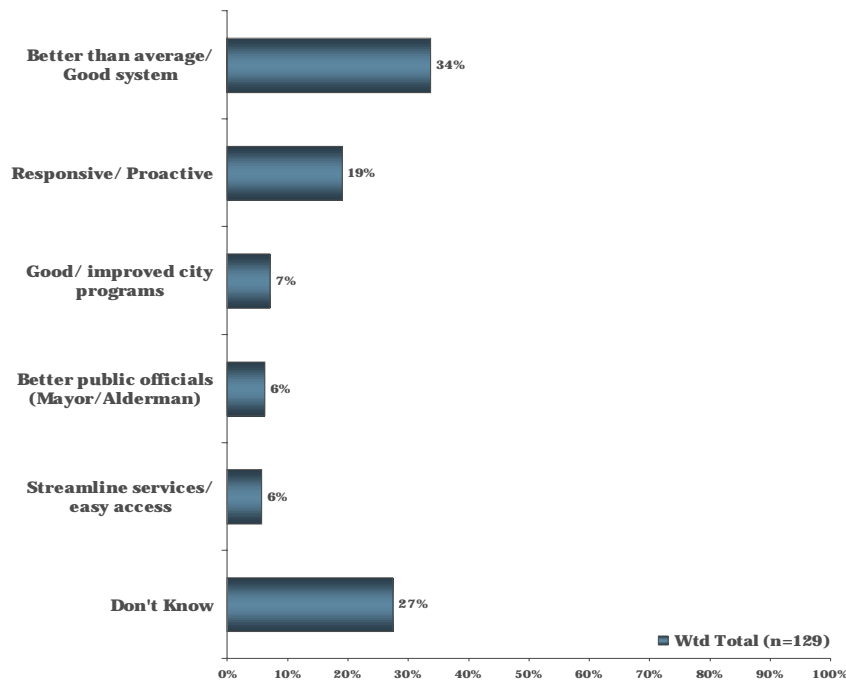


Q12: Overall, would you say that the quality of city government and city services in Somerville are much better than average; better than average; average; below average; or much worse than average?

City Government

Responsiveness and an overall good system are the main reasons why residents say that the Somerville city government is better than average. Personnel problems are the main reasons for saying the Somerville city government is below average.

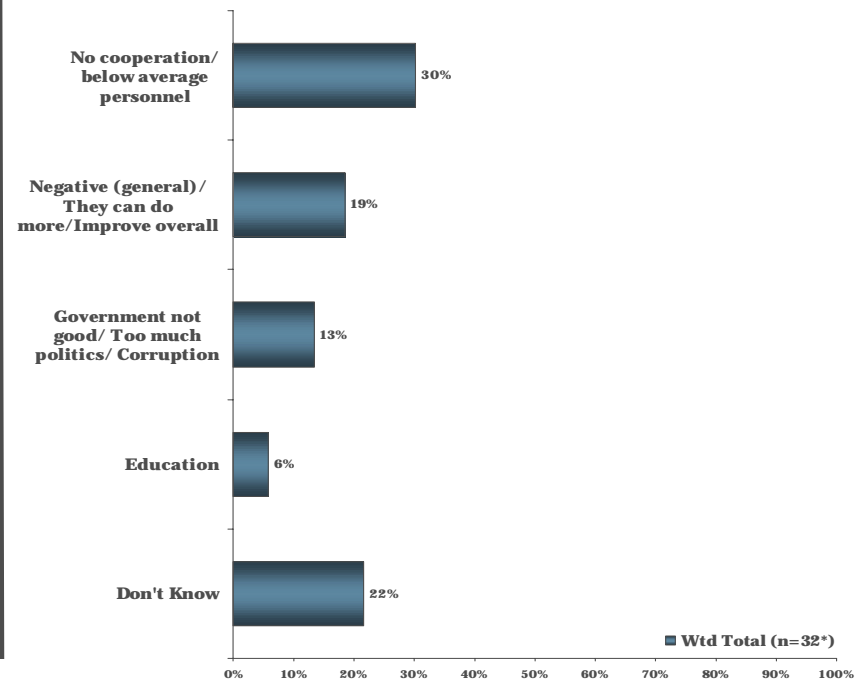
Why do you say that Somerville city government is much better/better than average?



Q12a: Why do you say that? (Top Mentions >5%)

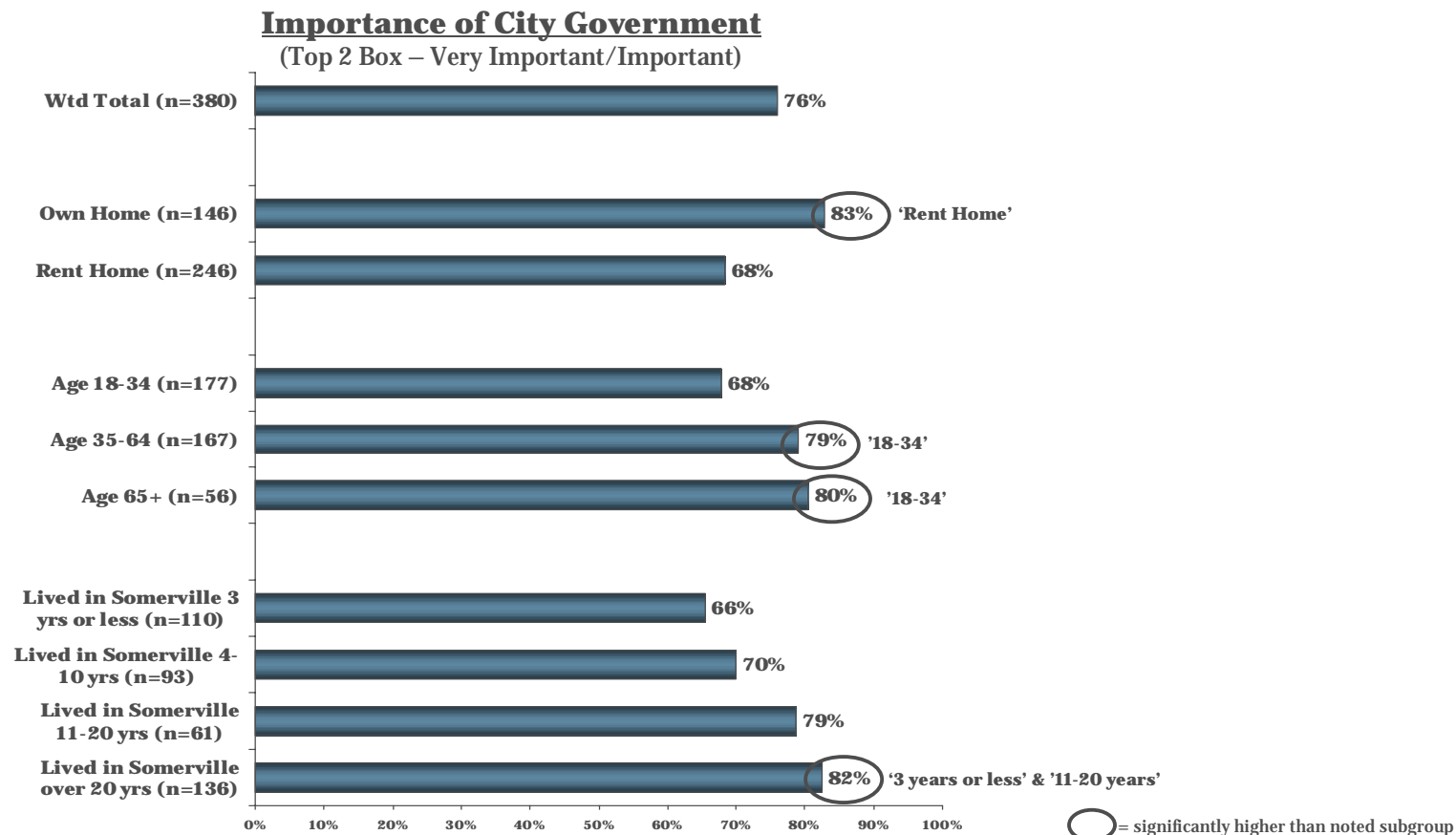
* Caution Small Base Size

Why do you say that Somerville city government is worse/much worse than average?



City Government

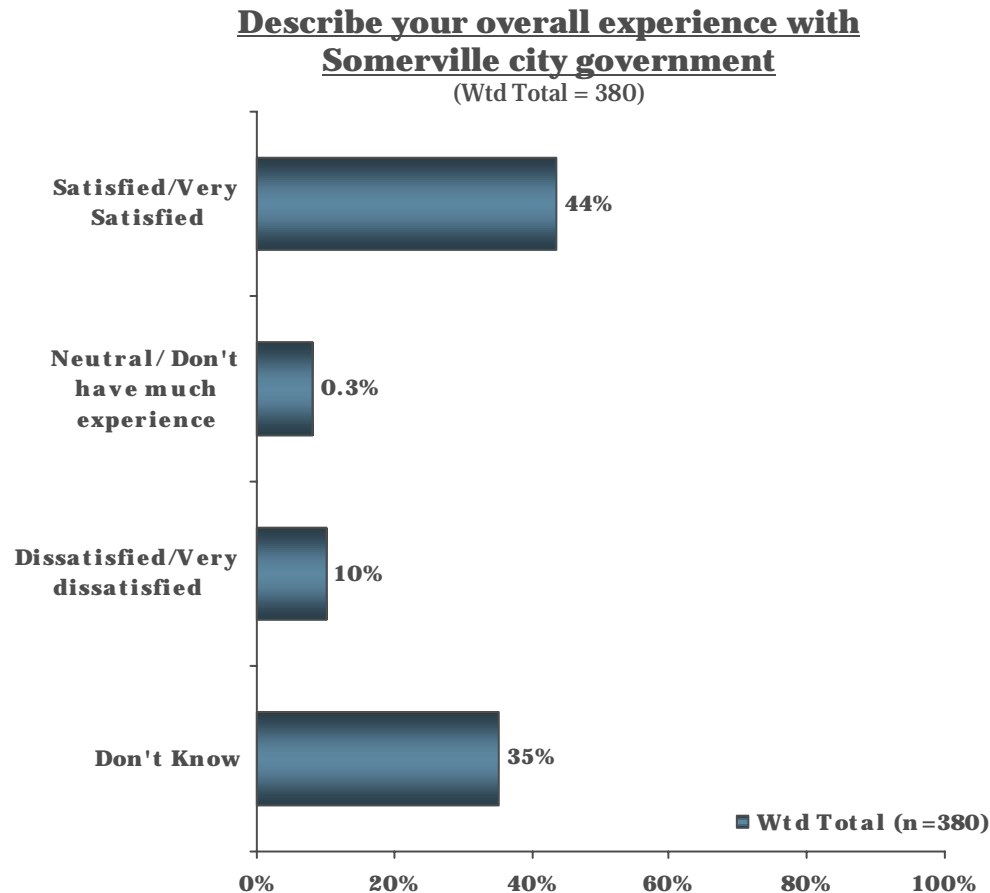
About three-quarters of residents say that the city government is important to their lives. Not surprisingly home owners, older residents and residents with longer tenure say the city government is important significantly more than other residents.



Q11: Would you say that the city government of Somerville – not including the public school system – is very important, important, not very important or not at all important to your life?

City Government

When asked to describe their overall experience with Somerville city government, most residents say that they are satisfied.



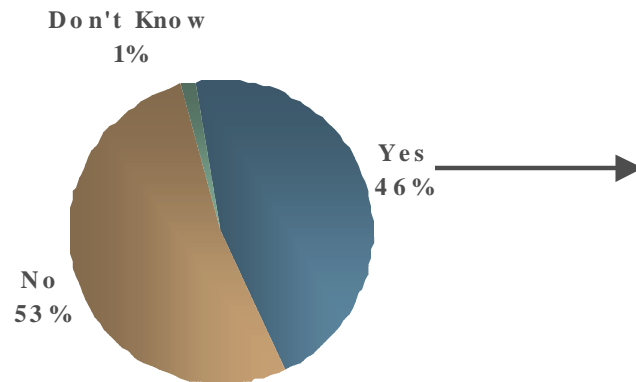
Q10: How would you describe your overall experience interacting with Somerville city government? (Top Mentions >5%)

311 Line

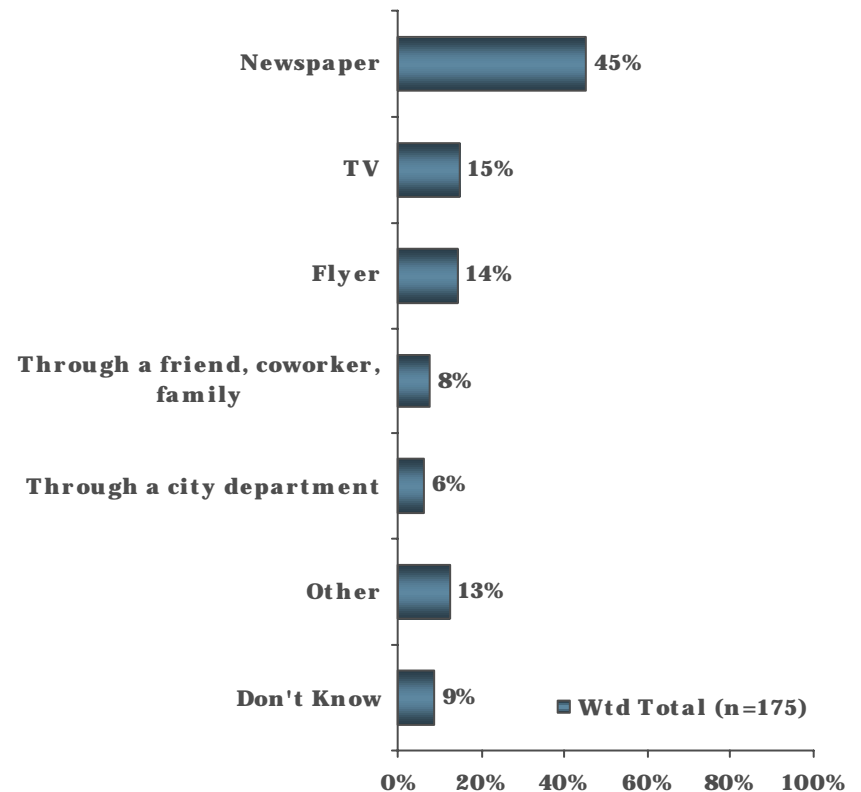
A little less than half of residents have heard about the city's new 311 line. Most heard via the newspaper.

Have you heard about the City's new 311 line?

(Wtd Total n=380)



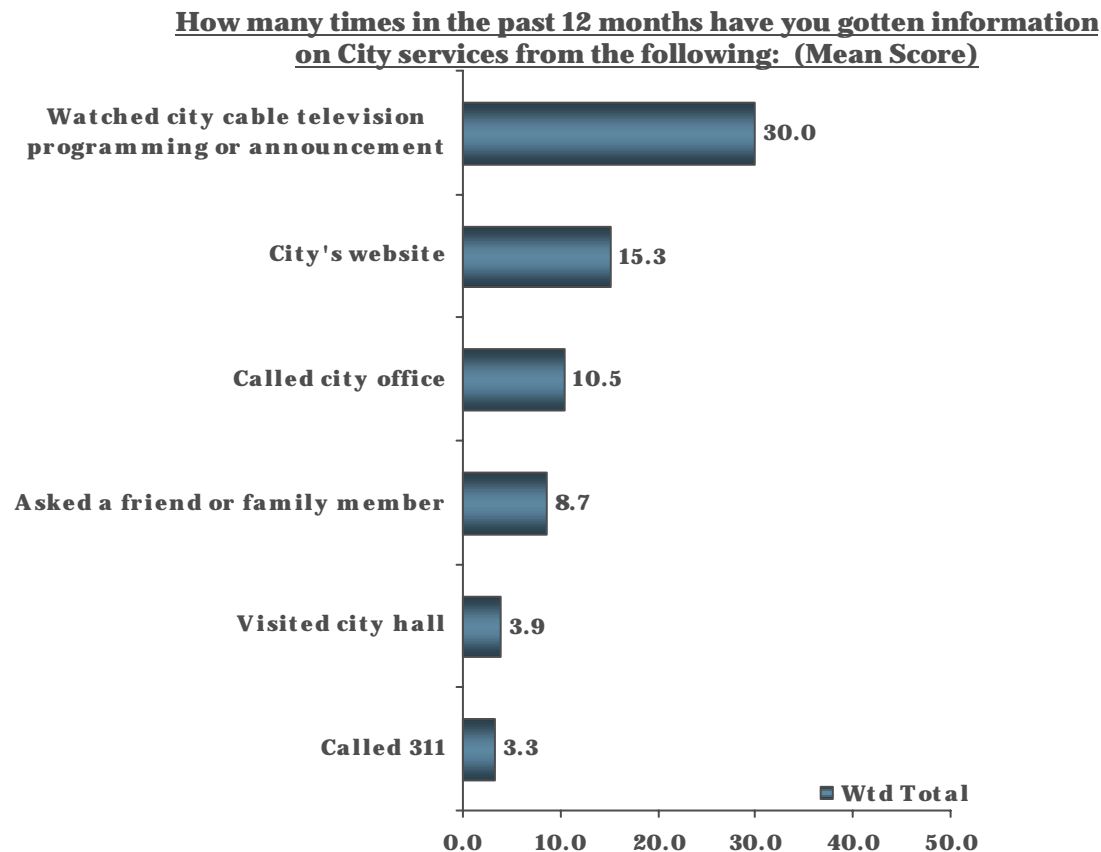
How did you hear about the 311 line?



Q15 : Have you heard about the City's new 311 line? Q15a: How did you hear about the 311 line?

Frequency of Services

The most frequently mentioned vehicle for acquiring information on city services is city cable television followed by the City of Somerville's website.



Q16 : In the past 12 months, how many times have you gotten information on City services from each of the following:

Customer Service Satisfaction

Residents are satisfied the most with the customer service of Libraries, the 311 call center and the Elections Department while they are the least satisfied with the customer service of the Traffic & Parking and the Inspectional Services department.



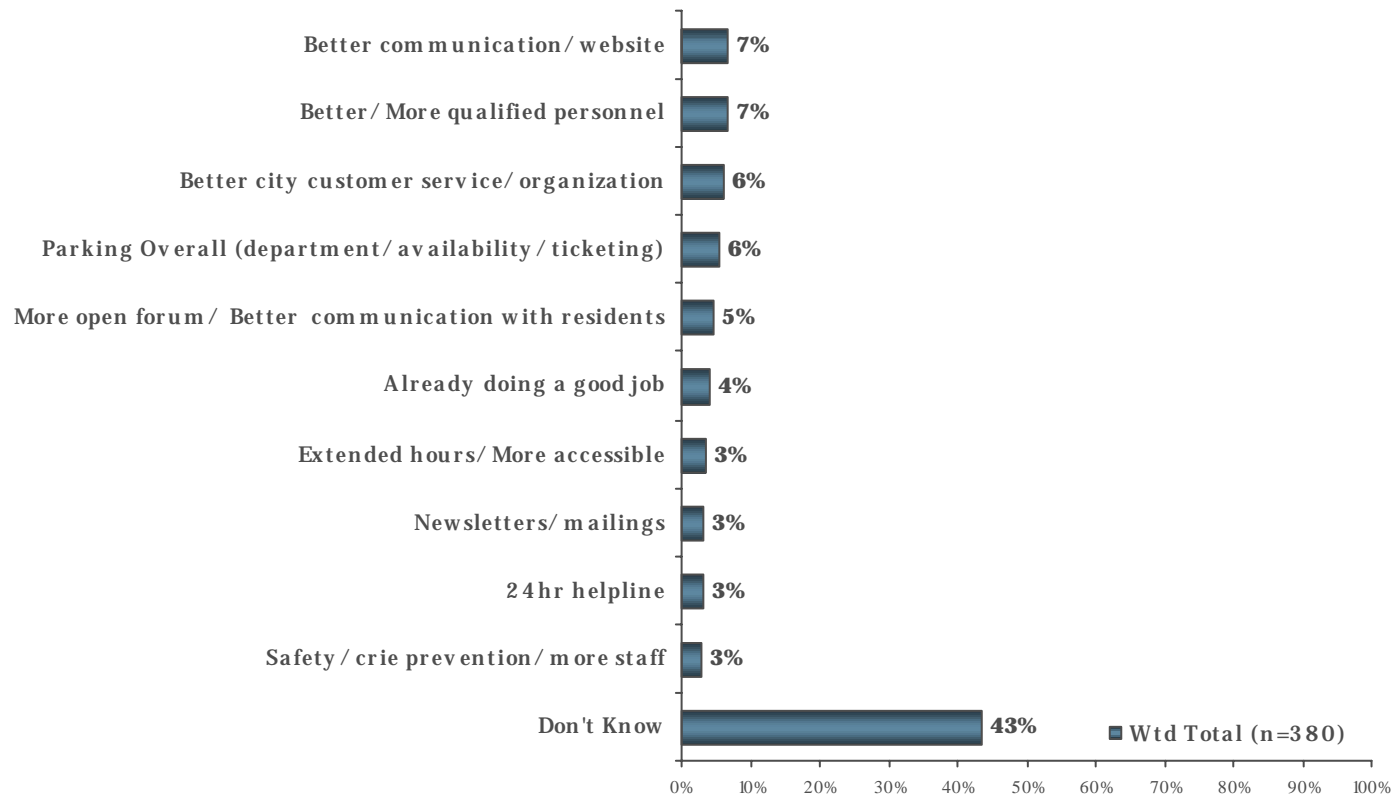
Q17 : Using a scale of very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, please rate your overall satisfaction with the following departments in terms of customer service. Customer service includes any interaction with the department over the phone, in person, city mailings, bills or on the city webpage. If you have not interacted with the department in the past 12 months please let us know that as well.

Please note that respondents who said don't know, not applicable or refused were taken out of these percentages. Base sizes for each reflect weighted total answering.

Customer Service Improvements

Most residents could not think of a customer service improvement. Of those mentioned, better communication and website as well as more qualified personnel were the top mentions.

Customer Service Improvements

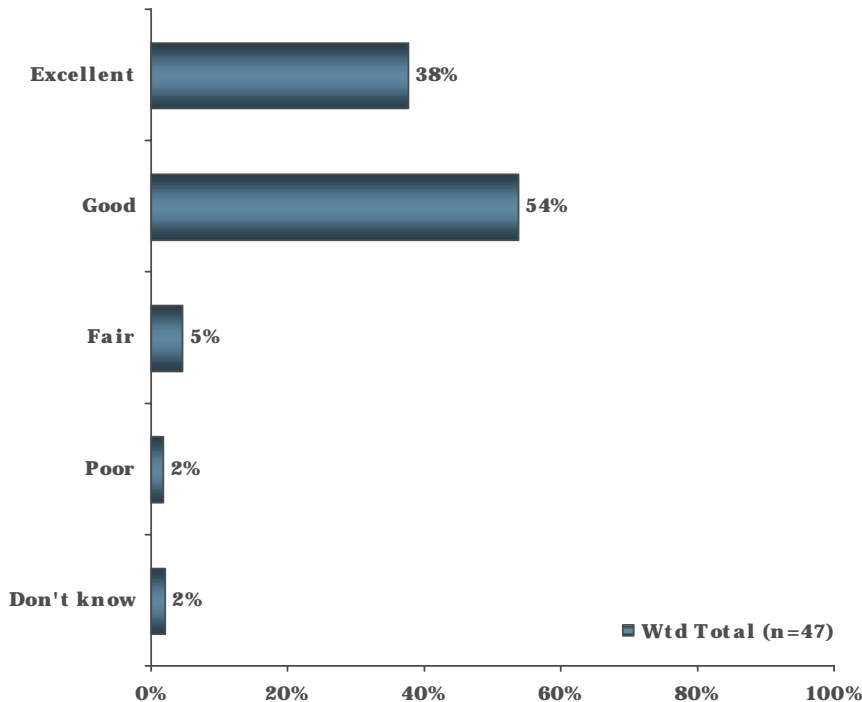


Q18 : How do you think the City can improve upon its customer service? (Top Mentions >2%)

Education – Public Schools

Most parents rate their child's public education as either good or excellent. While suggested improvements are mixed, some suggestions are better after-school programs, smaller classes and better teachers.

How would you rate your child's public education?



What type of improvements to the public school system would you like to see? (n=37)

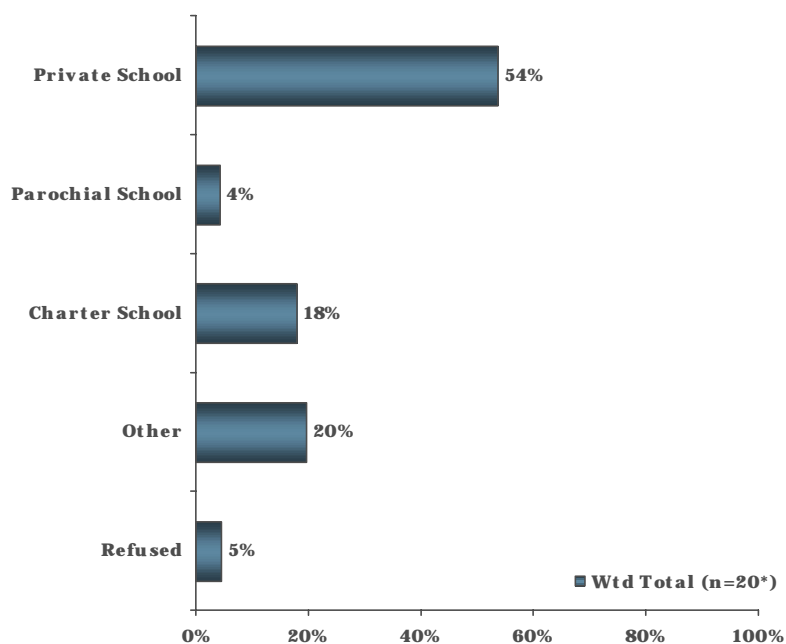
- “After school programs need to be better.”
- “I would like to see more after-school and extra-curricular programs, involving foreign languages, theater and other activities.”
- “I'd like to see more after school activities for the younger children.”
- “I would like to see smaller class sizes and higher teacher to student ratio.”
- “I would like to see my son in a Somerville public school with smaller classes, so that there would be more opportunities for one-on-one assistance from teachers.”
- “Somerville Public Schools should continually update the staff with younger, more motivated teachers.”

Q20d: How would you rate the education your child/children are receiving at the Somerville public schools? Q21: What type of improvements, if any, in the Somerville public school system would you like to see? (Not enough like responses to code)

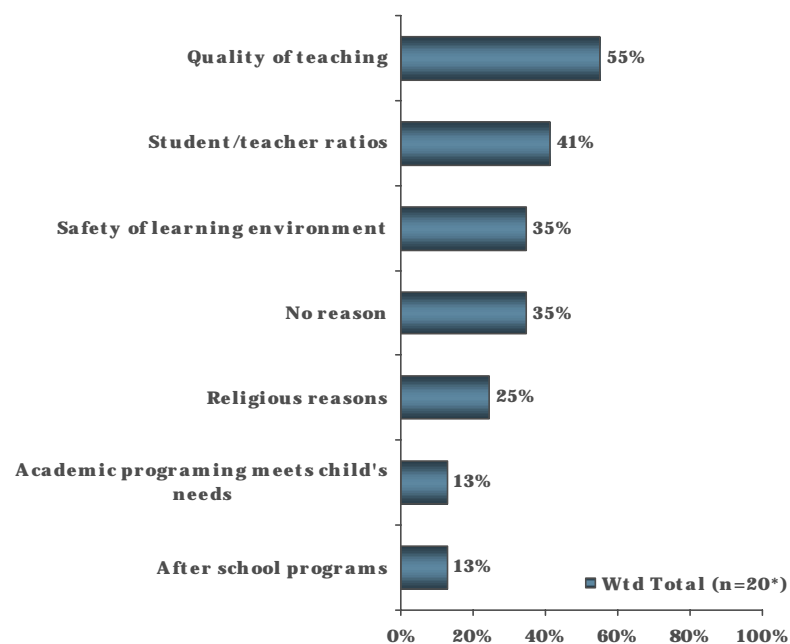
Education – Non-Public Schools

Of those parents that do not send their children to public school, most send their children to private school. The top reasons for not sending their child to public school are teaching quality and student/teacher ratios.

Where do your children receive their educational services?



Why did you choose to send your child/children somewhere else? (Top 3 mentions)



Q20b : Where do your children currently receive educational services? Q20c: Why did you choose to send your child/children somewhere else for their education – please select your top 3 reasons? Did you think you would have more satisfaction with: (Top mentions>10%)

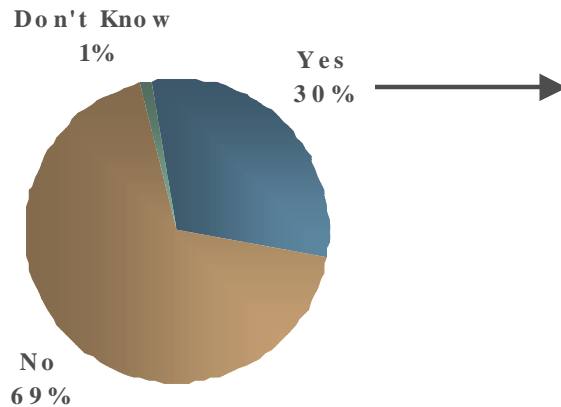
* Caution Small Base Size

Council On Aging

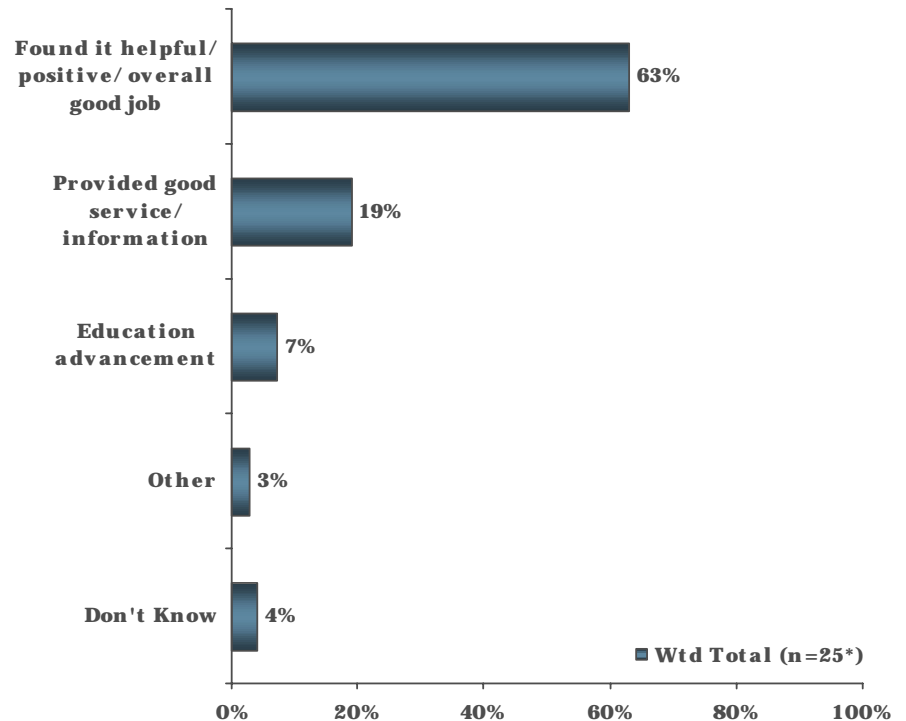
Only 30% of older residents have been to a Council on Aging center in Somerville. Of those that went most found it helpful.

Have you visited any of the Council on Aging centers in Somerville?

(Wtd Total n=83)



What was your experience like?

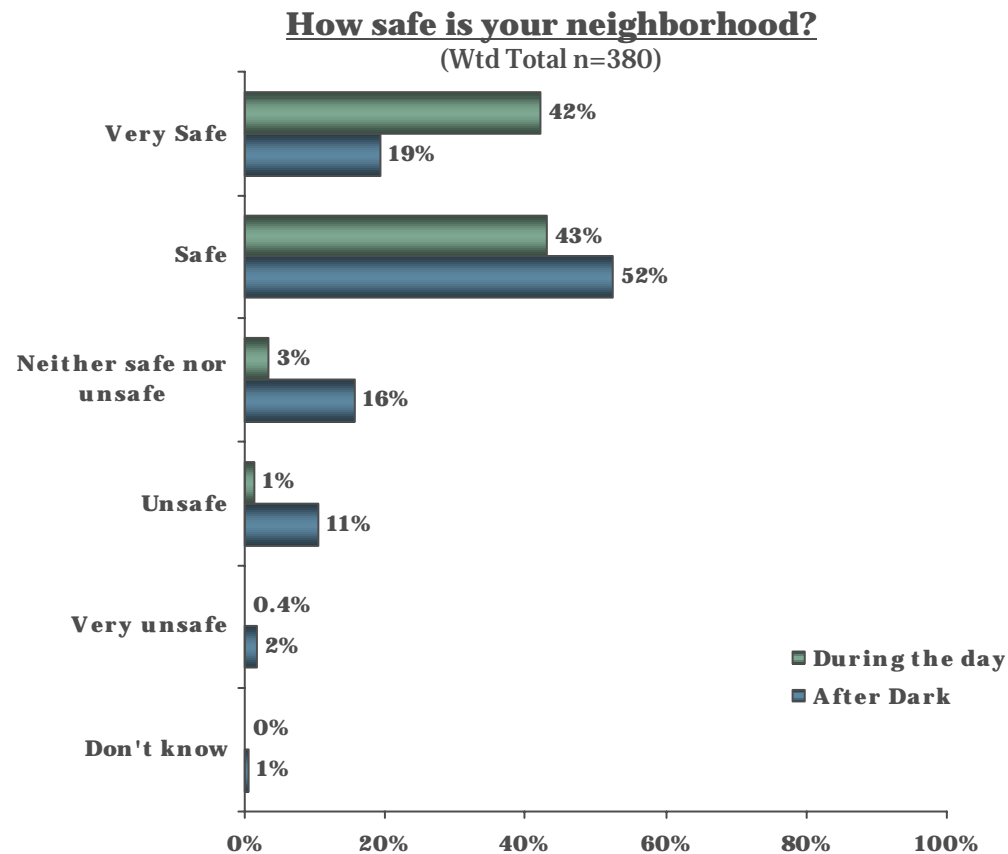


Q19 : Have you visited any of the Council on Aging centers in Somerville? Q19a: What was your experience at the Council on Aging?

* Caution Small Base Size

Safety

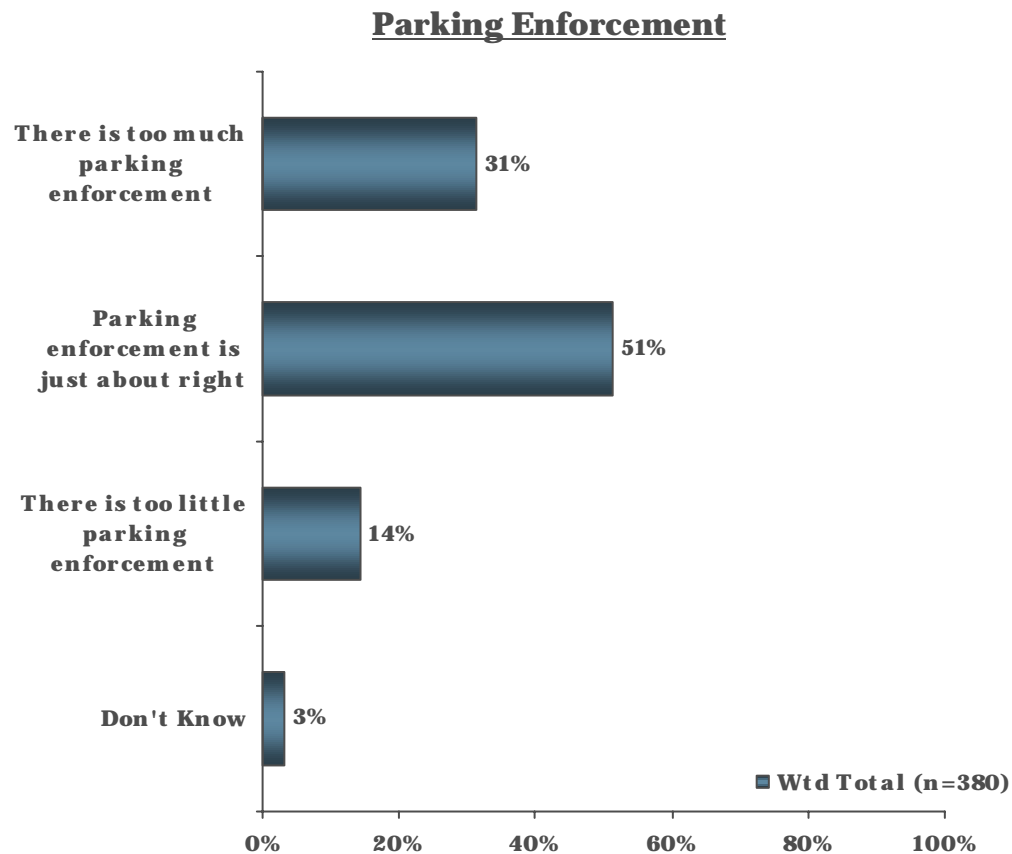
Almost all residents feel safe in their neighborhood during the day. Not surprisingly, fewer residents feel safe after dark.



Q13: Using a scale of very safe, safe, neither safe nor unsafe, unsafe or very unsafe, how safe would you say your neighborhood is?

Parking Enforcement

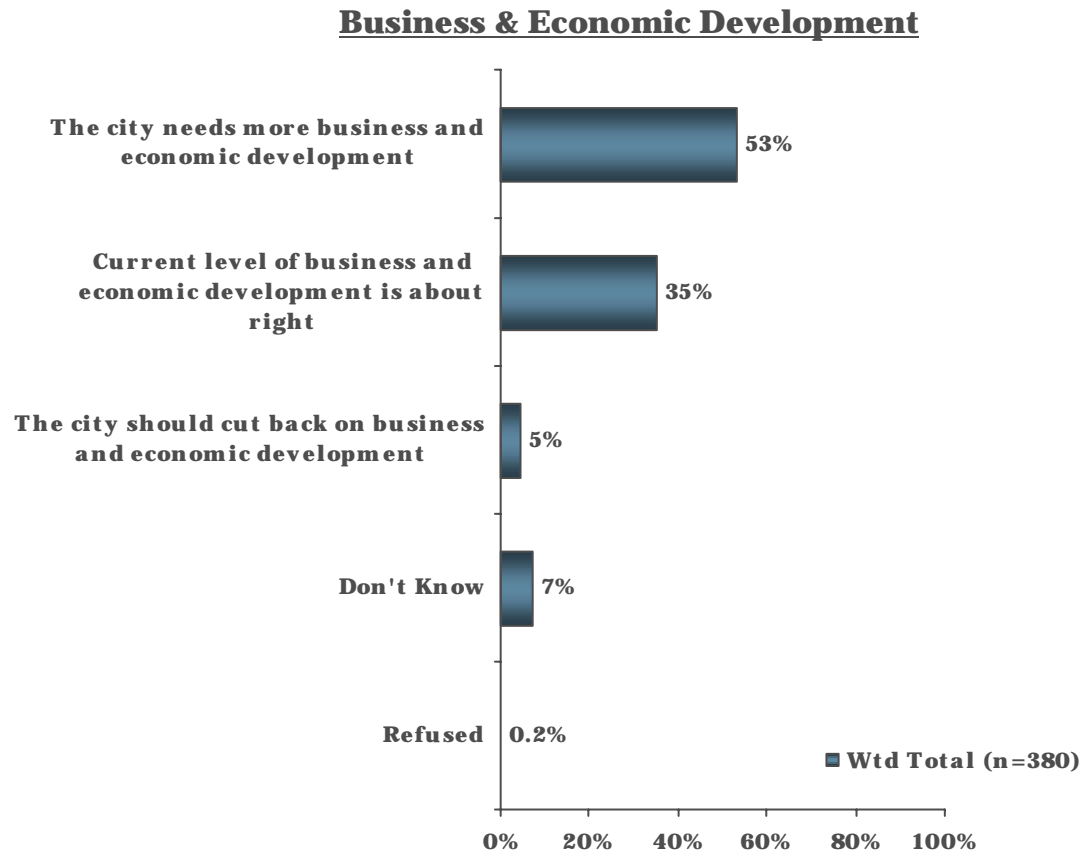
Most residents feel there is just the right amount of parking enforcement.



Q9: When it comes to parking enforcement in your neighborhood, do you think:

Business & Economic Development

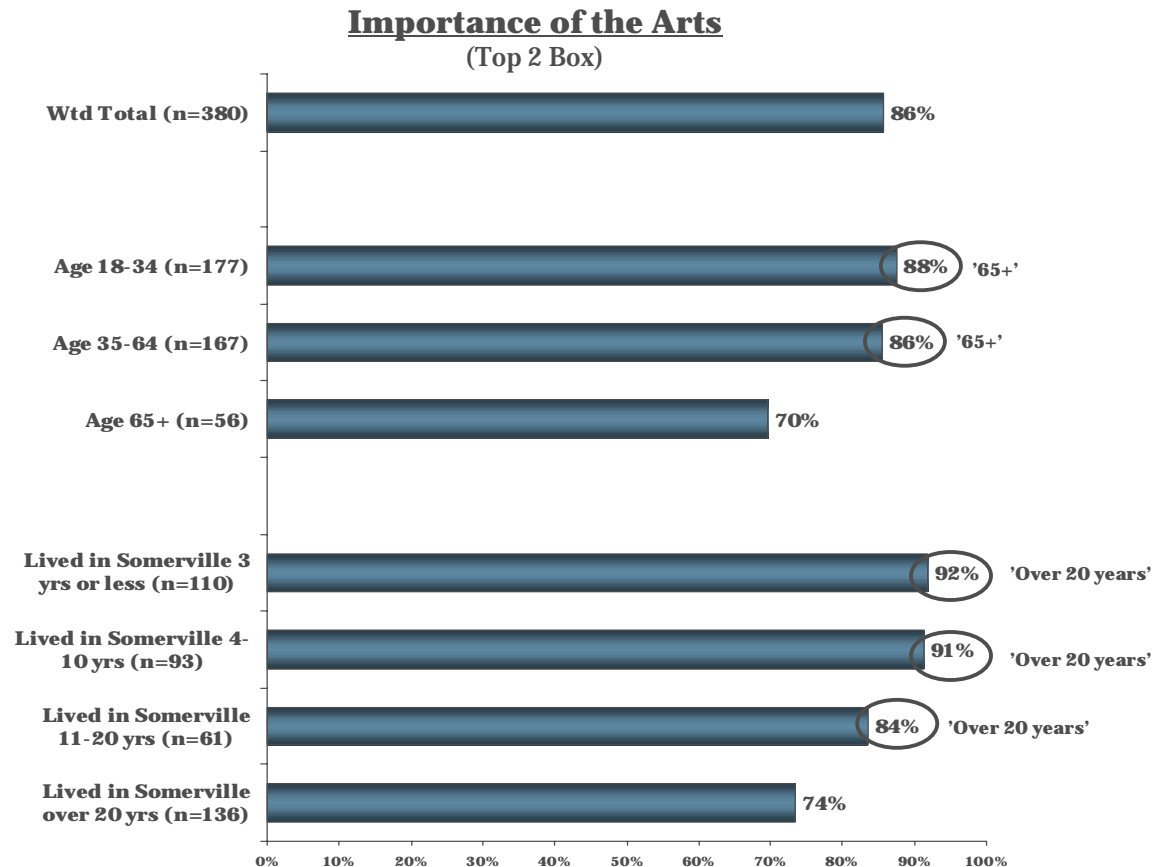
Over half of respondents think that Somerville needs more business and economic development.



Q6: Thinking about business and economic development in Somerville, do you think:

The Arts

Overall residents feel that the arts are important to the Somerville's economy, identity and sense of community. Respondents over 65 and longer tenure residents think the arts are significantly less important.



Q14: Thinking about the arts in Somerville, such as galleries, museums, live performances, film festivals, and public exhibits, how important do you think the arts are to the City's economy, identity, and sense of community? Would you say:

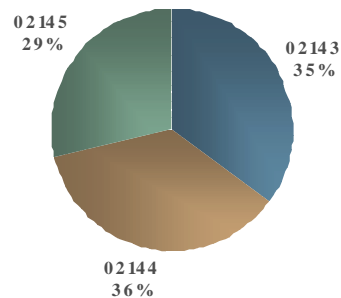
○ = significantly higher than noted subgroup

Appendix

Respondent Detail

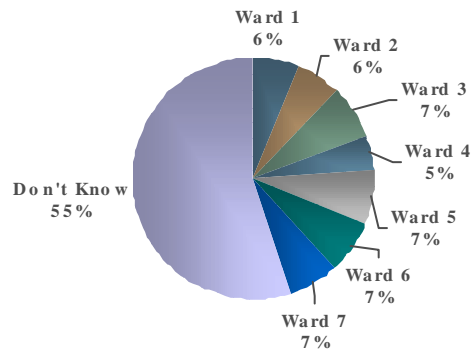
What is your zip code?

(Wtd Total n=380)



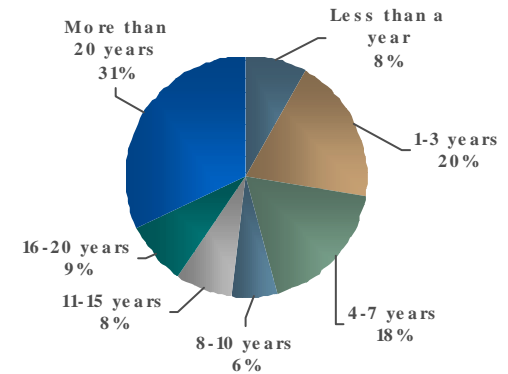
Which ward of Somerville do you live in?

(Wtd Total n=380)



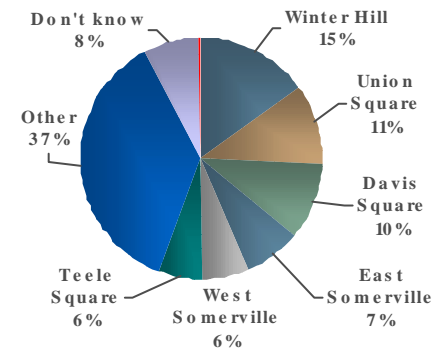
How long have you lived in Somerville?

(Wtd Total n=380)



Which neighborhood of Somerville do you live in?

(Wtd Total n=380)

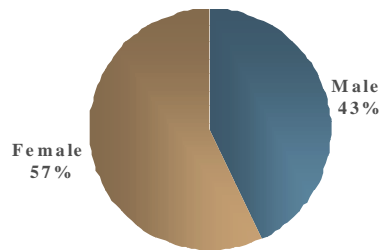


SCR1: What is your zip code? SCR2: How long have you lived in Somerville? SCR3: Which ward of Somerville do you live in? SCR4: Which neighborhood of Somerville do you live in?

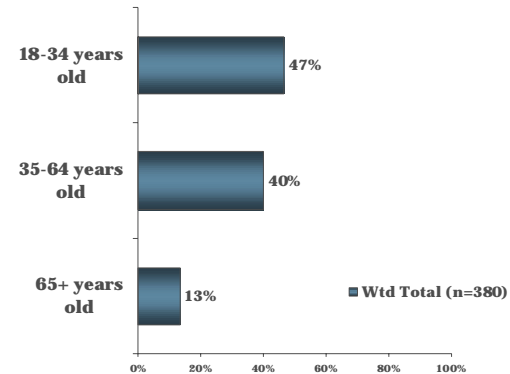
Respondent Detail

Gender

(Wtd Total n=380)

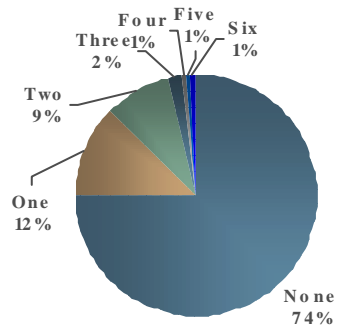


What age group do you fall in?



How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?

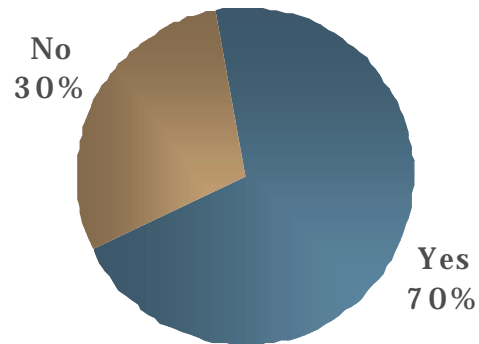
(Wtd Total n=380)



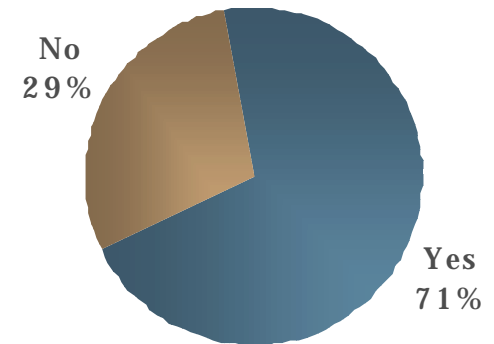
SCR5: What age group do you fall in? SCR6: How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? SCR7: Interviewer record gender.

Respondent Detail

Are any of your children school age?
(Wtd Total n=94)

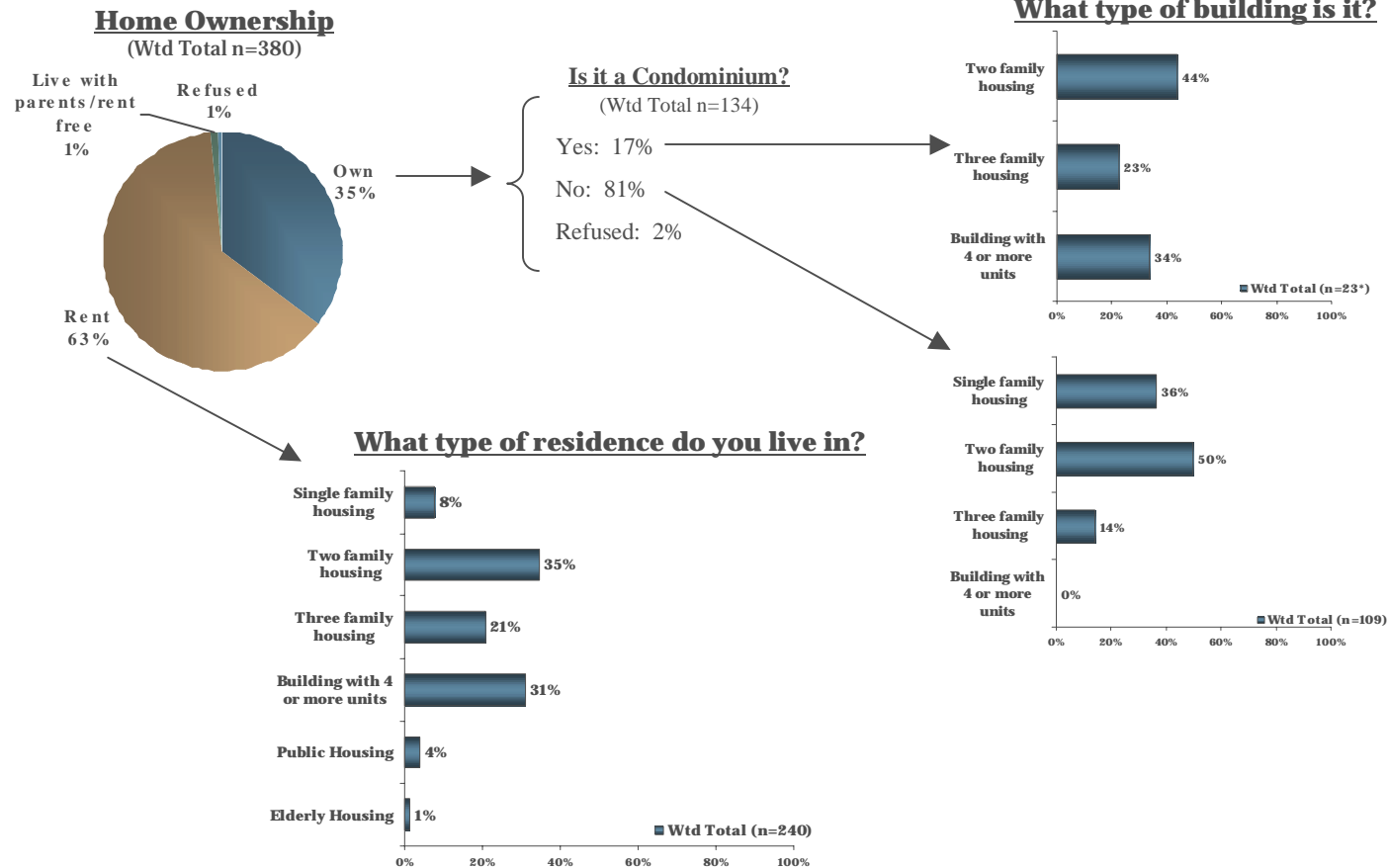


Do your children attend the Somerville Public Schools?
(Wtd Total n=66)



Q20: Are any of your children school age (Preschool-12th grade)? Q20a: Do your children attend the Somerville Public Schools?

Respondent Detail

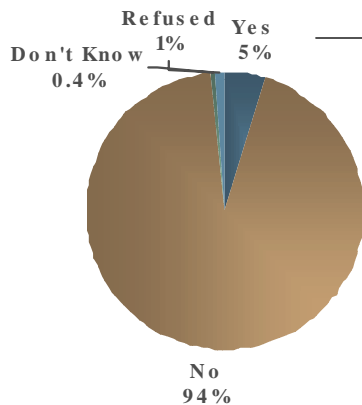


Q23: Do you own your home or rent? Q24a: If you own, is it a condominium? Q24b: If yes (to condominium), what type of building is it? Q24c: If no (to condominium), What type of building is it? Q25: If rent, what type of residence do you live in?

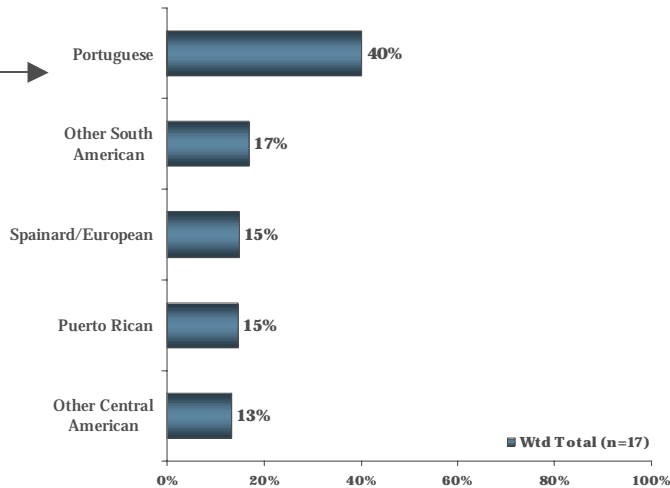
* Caution Small Base Size

Respondent Detail

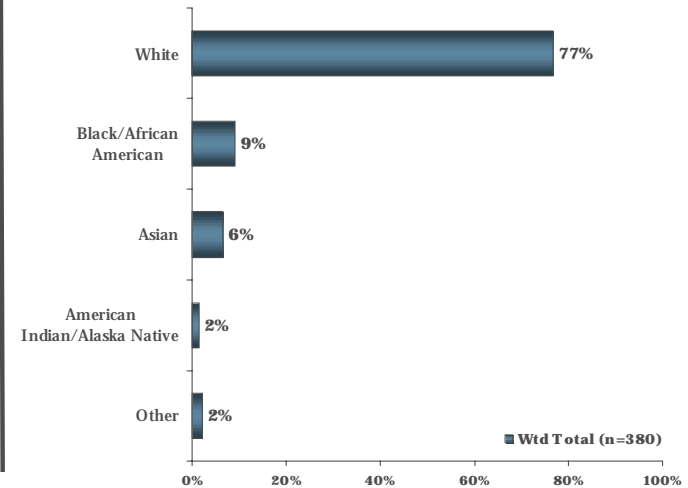
Hispanic
(Wtd Total n=380)



What do you consider yourself?



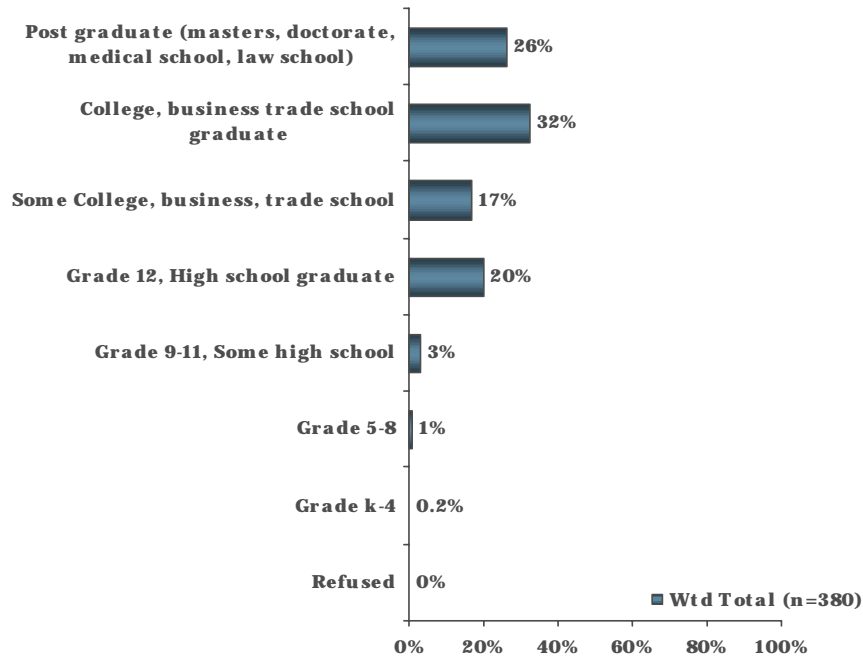
Would you consider your race to be...?



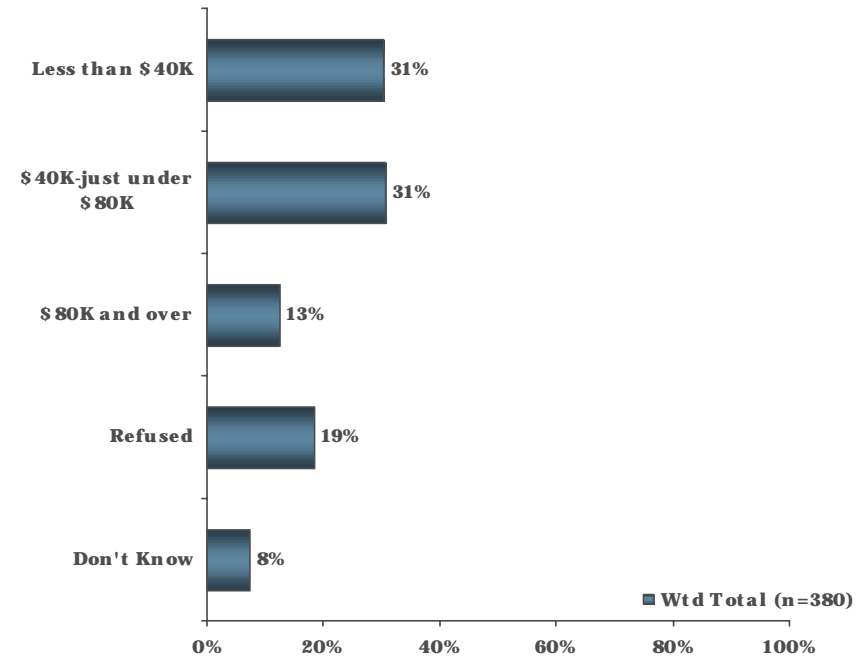
Q27: Are you Spanish/Hispanic or Latino? Q28: Would you consider yourself.... Q29: Would you consider your race to be? Would you say...

Respondent Detail

Education



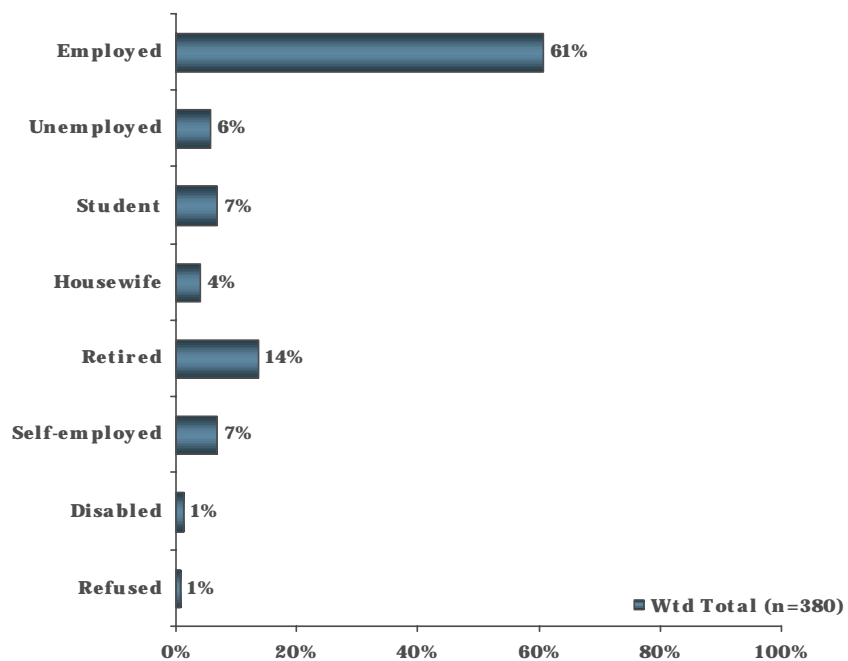
Income



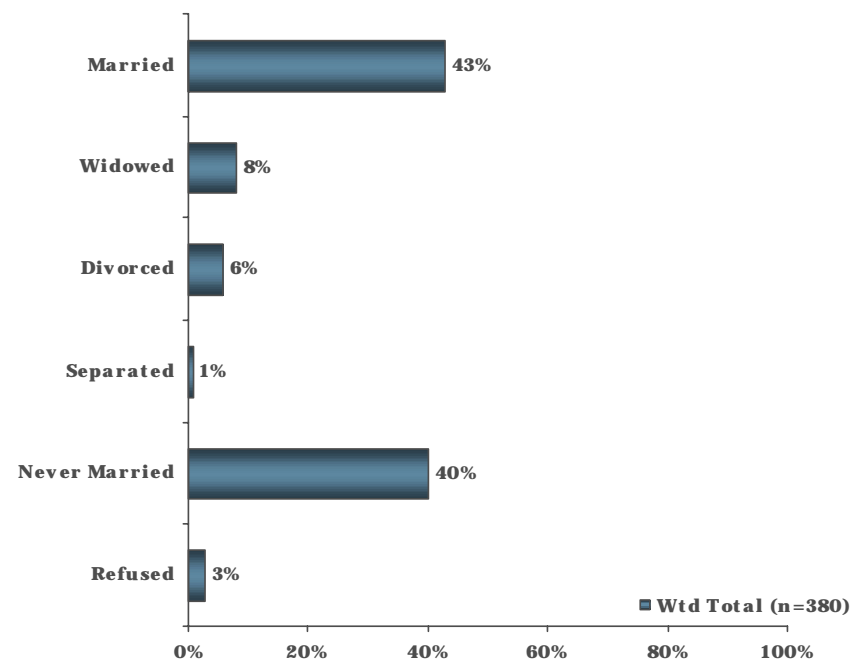
Q22: What was the last grade of school you completed? Q26: Into which of the following categories does your 2005 household income fall before taxes?

Respondent Detail

Employment



Marital Status



Q30: Are you presently? Q31: What is your marital status?